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The
Plea of the West
and other Poems.

GERALD J. LIVELY

[1913]

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DEPOT
EAST-SULPHUR

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Wishing You . . .

A Happy New Year.

1913.







The Song of the Stepdaughter.

*"The relative position of the East to the West is that of
a Stepmother to a Stepdaughter."*

Vide "CANADA AND HER COLONIES."

(A. Bramley-Moore).

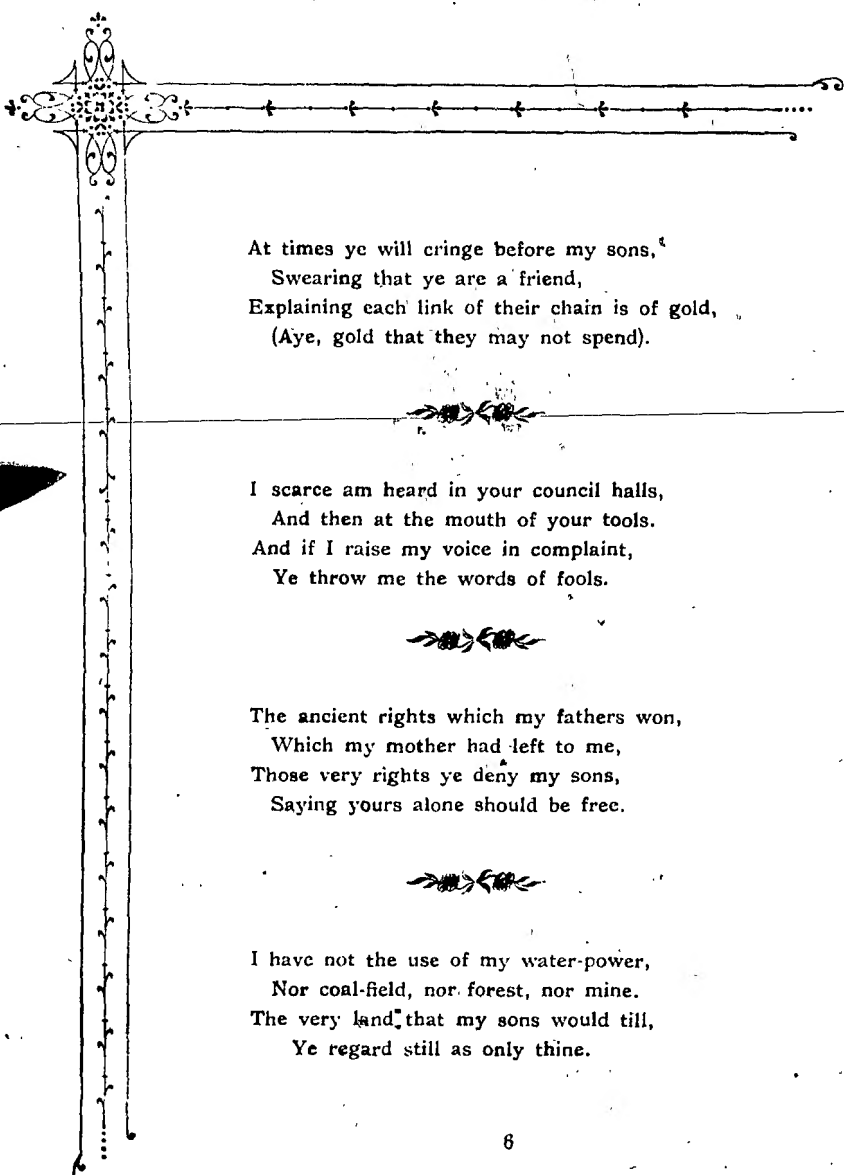
Ye'd have me worship your worn-out gods,
And bow to your worn-out creeds.
Ye'd impose upon me your worn-out dues,
To pay for your selfish needs.




Ye'd graft each unclean party and sept
That ye have, on my clean young mind.
With the incense of falsehood your acolytes swing,
The eyes of my soul ye'd blind.




Ye send your criers throughout my land,
They're liars and the breeders of lies,
They preach to my children the gospel of fools
Wrapped up in the words of the wise.




At times ye will cringe before my sons,
Swearing that ye are a friend,
Explaining each link of their chain is of gold,
(Aye, gold that they may not spend).



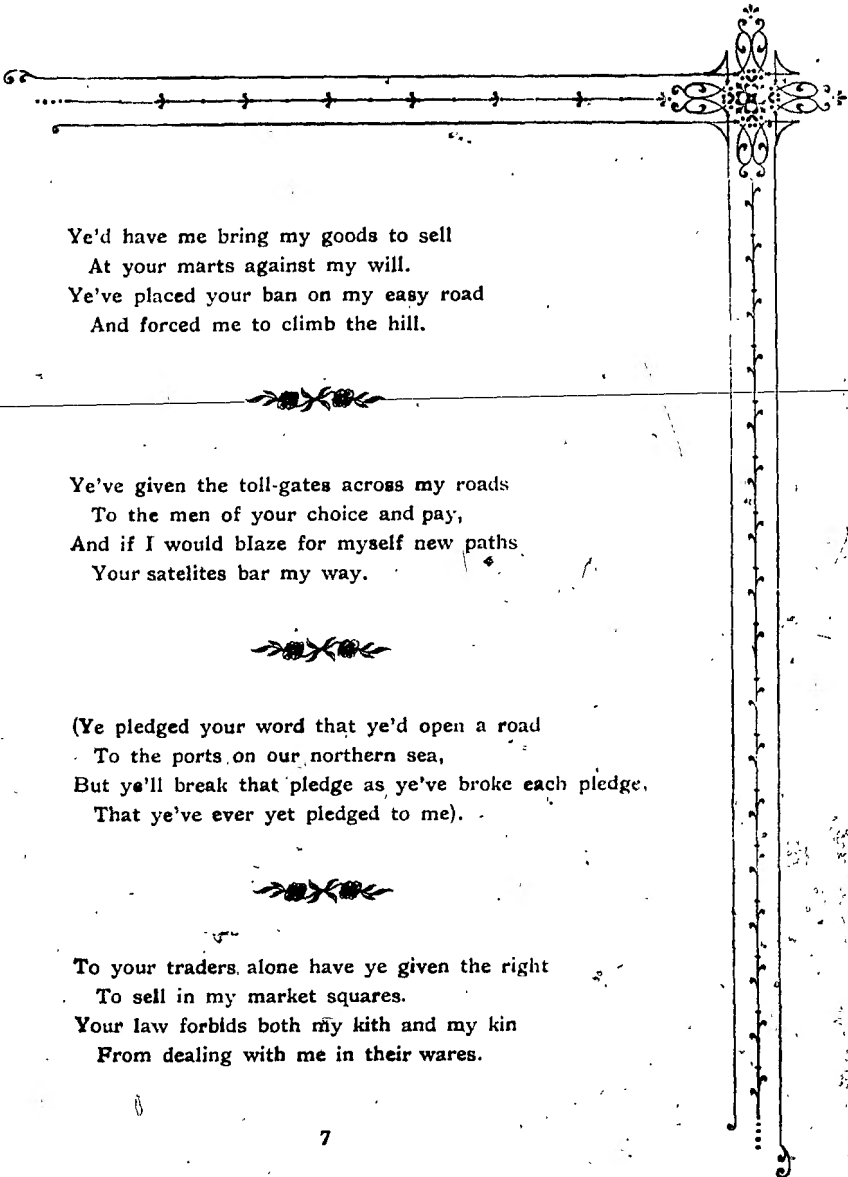
I scarce am heard in your council halls,
And then at the mouth of your tools.
And if I raise my voice in complaint,
Ye throw me the words of fools.




The ancient rights which my fathers won,
Which my mother had left to me,
Those very rights ye deny my sons,
Saying yours alone should be free.




I have not the use of my water-power,
Nor coal-field, nor forest, nor mine.
The very land that my sons would till,
Ye regard still as only thine.




Ye'd have me bring my goods to sell
At your marts against my will.
Ye've placed your ban on my easy road
And forced me to climb the hill.




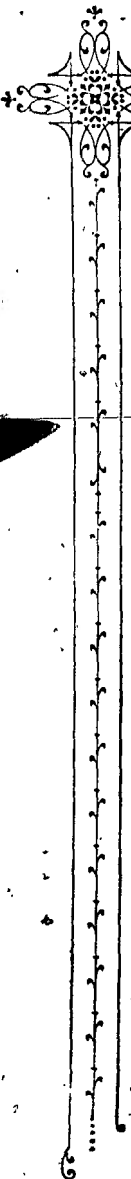
Ye've given the toll-gates across my roads
To the men of your choice and pay,
And if I would blaze for myself new paths
Your satellites bar my way.



(Ye pledged your word that ye'd open a road
To the ports on our northern sea,
But ye'll break that pledge as ye've broke each pledge,
That ye've ever yet pledged to me).




To your traders, alone have ye given the right
To sell in my market squares.
Your law forbids both my kith and my kin
From dealing with me in their wares.




To your robber lords have ye given the right
To plunder, and sack, and despoil.
They take their stand in each village street
And assess my sons on their toil.

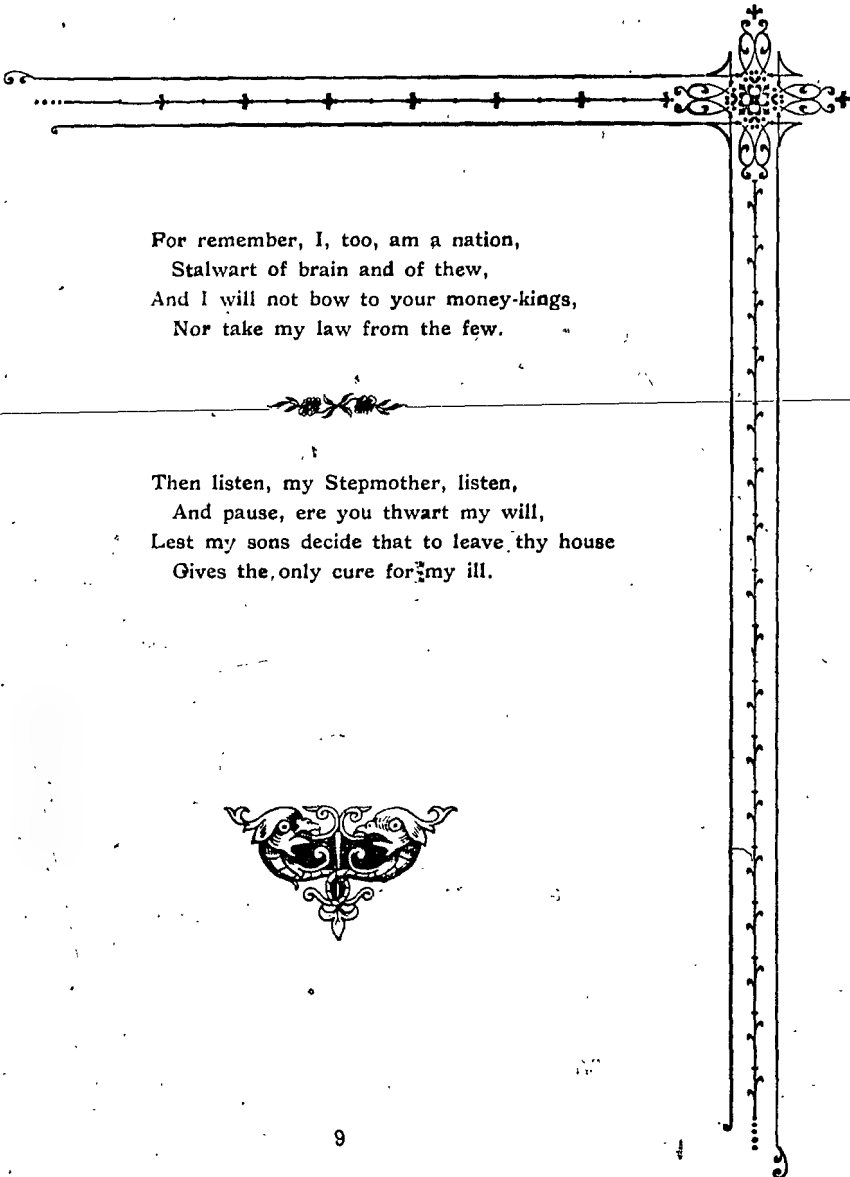
Your hirelings harry my toiling sons
As the coyote harries the fold,
And they may not take the law in their hands
As their fathers have done of old.




They may not take the law in their hands,
That law which is more than a word,
And break their bonds as their fathers did,
With tumult, and torch and sword.




So love that I once might have had for ye,
Ye are turning to bitter hate,
The respect that is due ye is fading away,
Won't ye pause, ere it be too late?



For remember, I, too, am a nation,
Stalwart of brain and of thew,
And I will not bow to your money-kings,
Nor take my law from the few.



Then listen, my Stepmother, listen,
And pause, ere you thwart my will,
Lest my sons decide that to leave thy house
Gives the, only cure for my ill.





+ The Rulers. +

By GERALD J. LIVELY.

*"Hear now a song, a song of broken interludes;
"A song of little cunning, of a singer nothing worth.
"Through the naked words and mean
"May ye see the truth between.
"As the singer knew and touched it" * * * —RUDYARD KIPLING.*

Canada Speaks:

THE fairest was I, when ye took me, of all the young fair lands,
Plastic as clay to the moulding, deserving a Master's hands.
My fair coast had ne'er been soiled with the tramp of felon throng;
And my rights were built upon equal rights, not on weaker peoples'
wrongs.
And I was fair, ay, wondrous fair, fair as our summer nights,
And my eyes were bright as my northern stars garnished with Northern
Lights.

My head was crowned in a mist of gold; I was perfect in form and
face,

And had my servants but been true my breasts would have nourished
a race.

And I was rich, ay, wondrous rich, in forest and mine and farm,

Awaiting the touch of the toiler to work his wonderful charm.

But all the wealth of my forests, the wealth of the mine and the
farm,

Instead of bringing me happiness has brought me shame and harm;

And I see a sullen people where there should be a race of braves,

And I see the monopolist marching, triumphant o'er necks of slaves,

My brave old Mother's still leading in Liberty's age-long race,

And I see a look of high resolve stamped on the proud old face,

And my Sister nations pass me—their cars bear Freedom's name—

But I turn my back upon the course, my head bowed down with
shame.

And the meaner people mock me and whisper my name with jeers,

And my proud young heart is breaking, and my eyes are a-brim with
tears.

Oh, why should my Sisters regard me with horror in their eyes
While I stand here in my sin and my shame sorrowfully, woefully
wise.

Listen to me, my Rulers, ye who have wrought my shame,

Wardens were ye of my honour, wardens were ye of my fame.

Listen, ye who have ruled me, who'd make my country a hell;

Listen ye Thieves and Panders, listen and I will tell.

Ye tore off my garments of honour, ye tore off my maiden's veil,

And ye thrust my body upon the street—as a harlot's is thrust—for sale.

Ye prostituted my Womanhood, and a Profit ye made of the wrong,

And ye held me naked before the crowd and the lewd and the leering
throng.

Ye've torn the heart from my forests, ye've stripped the guts from
my mines,

Retired, and divided the plunder—strictly on Party lines.

Ye've filch'd my lands from my people to be traded away for a song,

Or, divisioned them out amongst yourselves, making a wrong more
wrong.

Ye've culled, ye've appraised, ye've apportioned, and my wealth that in
trust I gave,

Is showered on a crowd of Grafters, and on Bribery's loathely slave.

Ye've even quarrelled amongst yourselves—"Knave" to each other
ye say—

Knives ye are and the sons of knaves, knaves in each others' pay.

And ye prate of the love that ye bear me; the land with your mouthings
ye fill;

Your love is wrapped-up in a foreign draft, and your souls in a dollar
bill.

Ye've reared across my highways the Toll-bars of Graft and Greed;

Ye've fattened a favored faction on the bread of my People's need;

Ye have given the keys of my Granaries into the hands of the Few

Who have all the sin of the Gentile and all the vice of the Jew.

Ye have raised up the hated "Octroi;" ye've established the Milling
Soke;

And my People are bowing beneath the rod, stumbling under the
yoke.

What have ye done with my Coal-fields, and my streams' unbridled
power?

Answer, ye Bawds and Lechers, what have ye done with my Dower?

Have ye used it well as a blessing, earning my Peoples' love?

Or fashioned it into a burden that calls down a curse from above?

Ye have given the Usurer mastery over my Peoples' lives,

Crushing the happiness out of their homes, starving their children
and wives—

That's what ye've done for my People, fettered and shackled like
slaves

Ye've delivered them over to Tyrants, Money-kings, Rogues and Knaves.

And Music and Art and Science languish throughout the land,

While the Party Hack and the Heeler are fattening at your hand.

And what have ye done for Religion, ye who bow to the Holy Rood?

Ye have mortared your Temples and Churches with my little Childrens'
blood.

Ye have sent my gold to the heathen. Hospitals bear your name;

And ye crowd your victims into the wards built with my Maidens'
shame.

There was never a worn-out evil of the older wiser lands,
But ye have planted it on my soil and fostered it with your hands—
Every known wrong of the ages and every mistake of the years,
Wrongs that have only been righted with bloodshed and bitter tears,
Mistakes that have only been mended in the flames of a Civil War.
Halt ye! My Rulers, halt ye! Halt, lest ye go too far.
But no more do I ask for justice, pleading on bended knees,
For I hear a murmur of discontent borne down on the Western
breeze;
And I see each prairie schoolhouse surging with eager throngs
As straight-limbed Farmer on Farmer rises and speaks my wrongs
And their cry is 'Equal rights to all and favors dealt to none,'
For each man has a right to life and his own place in the sun.
Long have I watched that People and the magic of their toil,
That turns the willow scrub to wheat; to gold my virgin soil.
They put their plow to the wilderness, and lo, 'tis a smiling field,
And the rich black earth responds to their touch, giving to them
its yield.

Watch, and the whole wide prairie is a waving, waveless sea,
Grain and grain and the shimmer of, grain as for as the eye can see.
So now I turn to the prairie where the Nations have sent of their
best,

Pinning my soul's salvation on the strength of the men of the West.

I see the smiles on your faces, the sneer, and the lift of the brow.

Smile not, my Masters, and sneer not, ye'd better be listening now.

Do ye think ye can fool that People, sober and strong and sane?

Their breed is the Anglo-Saxon-Celt crossed by the Norman-Dane.

Do ye think ye can mould that People into your willing Slaves?

Why! Their fathers were born within sight of the sea and nursed on
the ocean waves.

Do ye think ye can drive that People? Do ye think ye can hold
the reins?

Why! The fighting blood of the old Sea-Kings is coursing through
their veins.

Don't try it, my Masters, don't try it. Don't try to make them Slaves,
Lest they rise in their ire, like a wave of fire, and trample ye into
your graves.

Don't try it, my Masters, don't try it. Don't try it or ye will fall;
Don't try it lest they take their case to that last Dread Court of all,
That last Dread Court where the dues are paid in the husbands' blood
and widows' tears,

In the smoking plain and the trampled grain, and the bitter hate for
years and years.

The future flashes before me, I see the West arise,

One great united People, sober and strong and wise.

And they're sending their Heralds forward, forward shouting my
name,

Bidding ye do me justice, bidding ye cleanse me of shame,

And marching behind their Heralds, holding their heads like Kings,

Line upon line in shining ranks, each close-lock't cohort swings.

And I see ye cower, my Masters, and the whole bright heavens sing,

As down in the mire 'neath my People's ire goes Combine, Merger and
Ring;

And the Party Hack and the Heeler and the Land Speculator and Trust
Are swept from their path by my People's wrath and trampled into
the dust.

* * * * *

And I take my place in Liberty's race now that I'm cleansed from
shame

And the People shout when they see me, for my Car bears Freedom's
name;

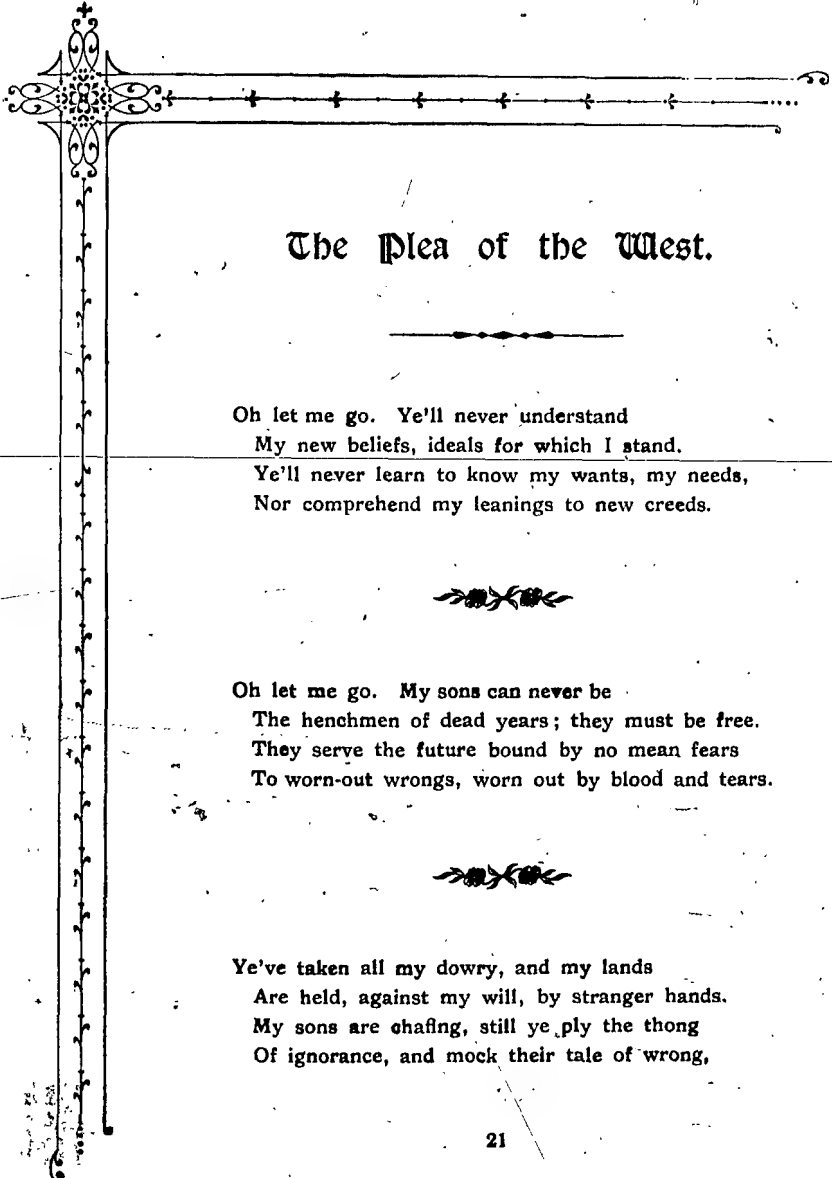
The old Mother turns to greet me, a smile lights her face like the Sun;
She kisses my cheek and whispers, "Well done, my Daughter, well
done."

And my Sisters come running towards me, catching me by the hands,
And kiss me and say I'm the fairest of all the Free Young Lands.
Now I'm first in the race and I'm winning, cheered on by the gods
above,

And my House is cleansed from West to East and I'm rich in my
People's love.







The Plea of the West.

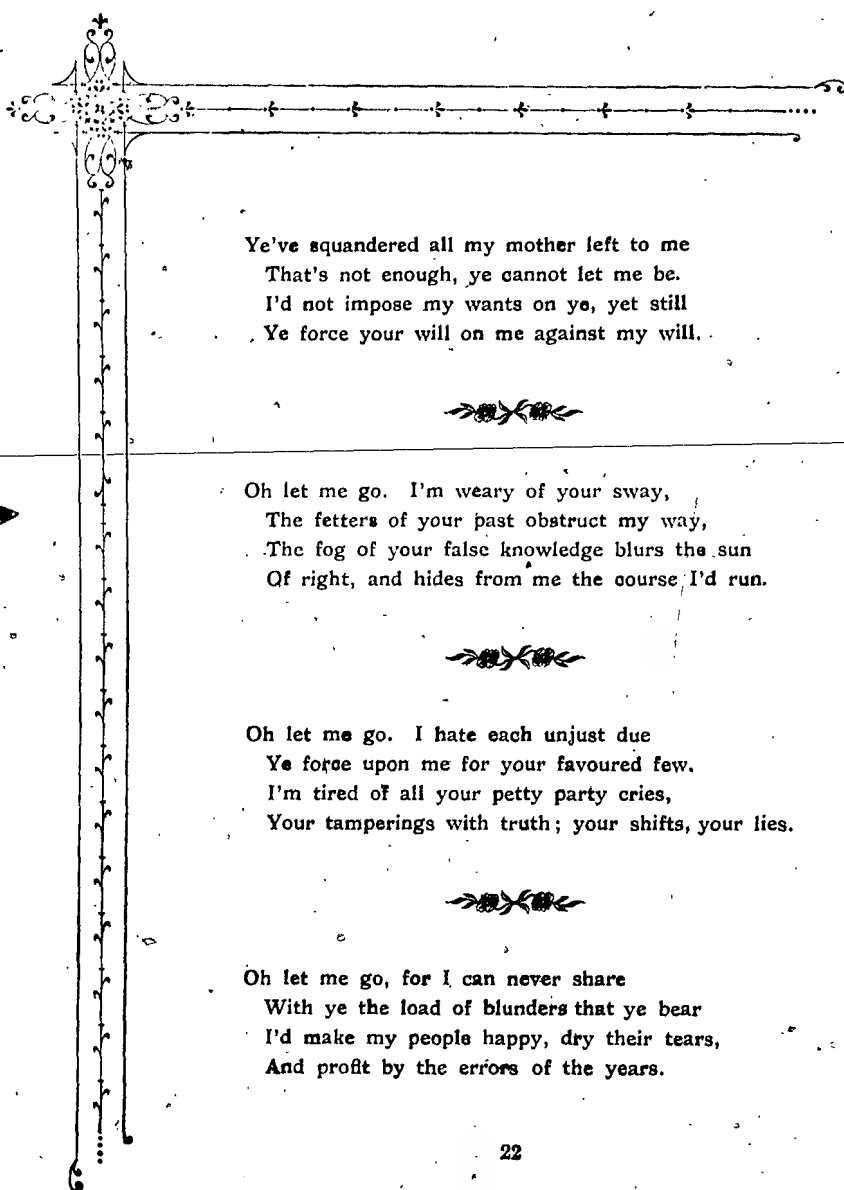
Oh let me go. Ye'll never understand
My new beliefs, ideals for which I stand.
Ye'll never learn to know my wants, my needs,
Nor comprehend my leanings to new creeds.



Oh let me go. My sons can never be
The henchmen of dead years; they must be free.
They serve the future bound by no mean fears
To worn-out wrongs, worn out by blood and tears.



Ye've taken all my dowry, and my lands
Are held, against my will, by stranger hands.
My sons are chafing, still ye ply the thong
Of ignorance, and mock their tale of wrong,



Ye've squandered all my mother left to me
That's not enough, ye cannot let me be.
I'd not impose my wants on ye, yet still
Ye force your will on me against my will.



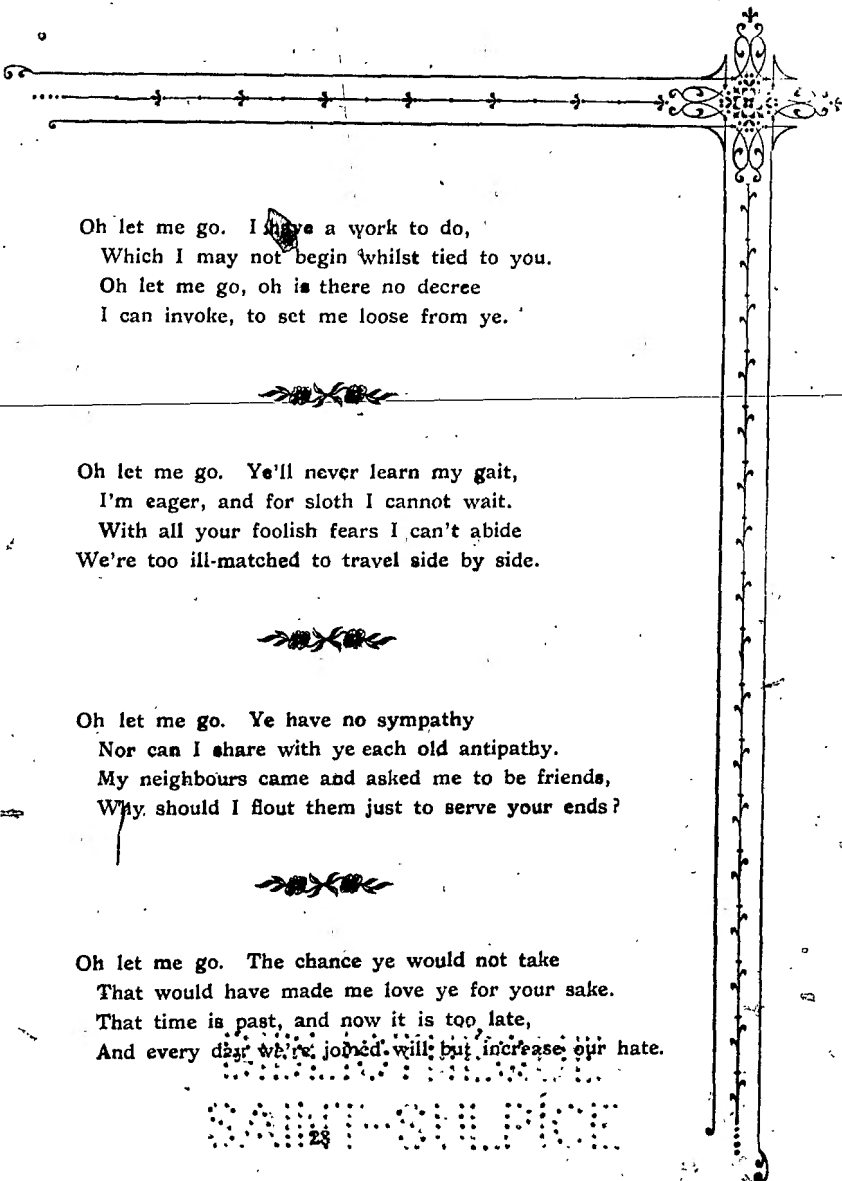
Oh let me go. I'm weary of your sway,
The fetters of your past obstruct my way,
The fog of your false knowledge blurs the sun
Of right, and hides from me the course I'd run.




Oh let me go. I hate each unjust due
Ye force upon me for your favoured few.
I'm tired of all your petty party cries,
Your tamperings with truth; your shifts, your lies.




Oh let me go, for I can never share
With ye the load of blunders that ye bear
I'd make my people happy, dry their tears,
And profit by the errors of the years.




Oh let me go. I have a work to do,
Which I may not begin whilst tied to you.
Oh let me go, oh is there no decree
I can invoke, to set me loose from ye.



Oh let me go. Ye'll never learn my gait,
I'm eager, and for sloth I cannot wait.
With all your foolish fears I can't abide
We're too ill-matched to travel side by side.

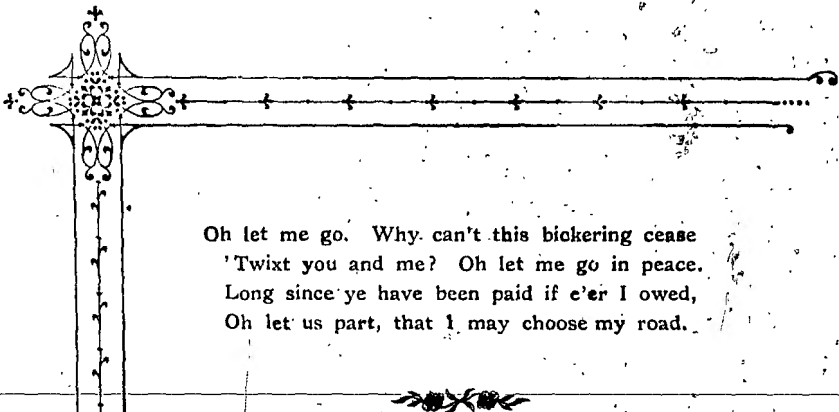


Oh let me go. Ye have no sympathy
Nor can I share with ye each old antipathy.
My neighbours came and asked me to be friends,
Why should I flout them just to serve your ends?

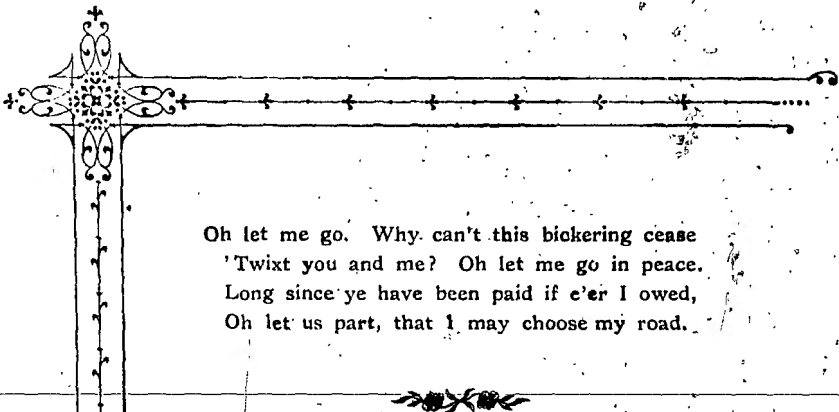


Oh let me go. The chance ye would not take
That would have made me love ye for your sake.
That time is past, and now it is too late,
And every day we're joined will but increase our hate.

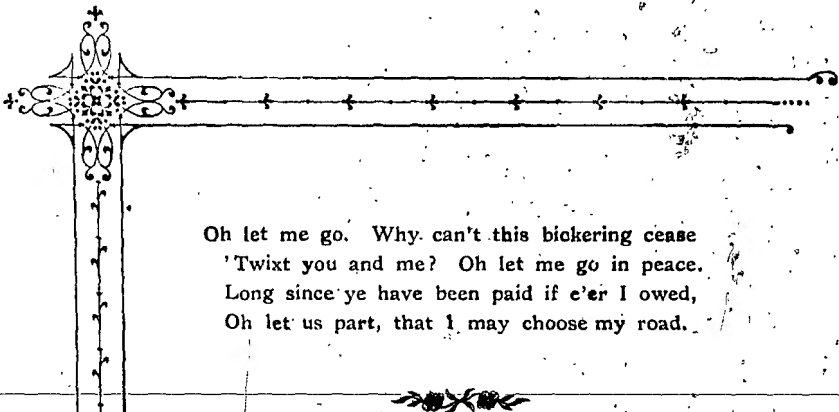
SAINT STURGEON



Oh let me go. Why can't this bickering cease
'Twixt you and me? Oh let me go in peace.
Long since ye have been paid if e'er I owed,
Oh let us part, that I may choose my road.



Oh let me go, I'm loyal to the throne,
But when I take the oath I'd swear alone.
I will not walk behind your purse-proud lords,
Nor echo, like a child; their empty words.



Oh let me go before the smouldering wrath
Breaks into flame, and sweeps ye from my path,
The path that progress points, the path we may not tread
Together, since your heart and soul are dead.

LONDON:
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